

Personal Notes  
Fourth Sunday of Lent, 31A, April 3, 2011  
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First Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a  
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 (1)  
Second Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14  
Verse before the Gospel: John 8:12  
Gospel: John 9:1-41

## Commentary

*The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want*, is the theme for this Sunday. Such Faith in God is something other than faith in Holy Mother, the Church. While God is compassion, honesty, transparency, and adult treatment, Holy Mother the Church can only strive for such perfection. The prayer for this Sunday is about that striving. The current Church is ravaged by scandals emanating from the sexual abuse cover-ups by the hierarchy. The latest problem for me, revolves around the preeminent Catholic historian of the mid- to late-Twentieth Century, Monsignor John Tracy Ellis.<sup>1</sup>

Ellis hovered over David Francis Sweeney writing a 1963 doctoral dissertation on John Lancaster Spalding (1840-1916).<sup>2</sup> Ellis did not want to let Sweeney tell too much about Spalding, certainly not what Ellis felt the Faithful could not bear to learn.

The drama unfolds in the current issue of The Catholic Historical Review. In "The Historical Methodology of John Tracy Ellis," scholar C. Walker Gollar documents a relatively unsubstantiated assertion by Andrew Greeley that Sweeney covered up inappropriate love letters Spalding wrote. Greeley is a well-known novelist and fiction writer who started out as a sociologist, whom I continue to respect. Spalding was Bishop of Peoria, Illinois and founder of The Catholic University of America.<sup>3</sup>

Under the tutelage of Ellis, Sweeney privately asserted that he did not think there was merit to the charge of sexual improprieties by Spalding. Sweeney never denied the charge existed, only that the charge did not have enough merit for his dissertation or later publication.<sup>4</sup> Worse, Spalding was alleged to have lost his faith in the Catholic Church. Covering up any of that material causes broader credibility problems. Spalding was in line to be Archbishop of Chicago, but after the Vatican spy returned to Rome, Spalding never was promoted.

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<sup>1</sup> C. Walker Gollar, "The Historical Methodology of John Tracy Ellis," The Catholic Historical Review, Vol. XCVCII, No. 1 (January 2011) 46-75.

<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Lancaster\\_Spalding](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Lancaster_Spalding) (accessed January 24, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Catholic\\_University\\_of\\_America#History](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Catholic_University_of_America#History) (accessed January 29, 2011).

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.worldcat.org/search?q=au%3ACross%2C+Robert+D.&qt=hot\\_author](http://www.worldcat.org/search?q=au%3ACross%2C+Robert+D.&qt=hot_author) (accessed January 31, 2011).

To be trusted, historians must not let even church politics take precedence over truth. In other words, for as much legitimate trust he did earn, Ellis, the preeminent Catholic historian of the mid- to late-Twentieth Century cannot be entirely trusted. Neither can those he trained and influenced. Neither can The Catholic University of America.

For over twenty years, since 1990, the administration of The Catholic University of America has been on the censured list of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).<sup>5</sup> This means that the administration of The Catholic University of America does not respect the freedom professors need to tell the truth as they see it. The problem is not what the professors see; the problem is not listening to the faculty before condemning the professor. There is nothing against faith and morals against listening; though The Catholic University of America claims there is. That is why the administration remains on the AAUP censured list.

Ellis would never have gotten into trouble with the administration of The Catholic University of America. While Ellis denounced the “history of moonlight and roses,” that denunciation only went so far. The limit was the possibility of giving scandal to the Faithful.

In other words, nothing emanating from The Catholic University of America can be trusted as the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The Faithful, therefore, cannot be entirely sure of their Roman Catholic history as told in the United States. Covering up exacerbates, rather than dampens, scandals and potential scandals. The Faithful are aware that the church is a human institution, where all of her components, clergy and Faithful, are imperfect.

As a college history professor, I took a different attitude than Ellis did toward what I thought the Faithful could bear. My institution, Thomas Nelson Community College, of the Virginia Community College System, gave me relatively free rein. After I retired, I placed all of my Western Civilization lectures on line at [www.western-civilization.com](http://www.western-civilization.com) where they remain for all to critique. I simply told the truth as best I understood it, and let God worry about the scandal part of it. When I told my students that that is what I was doing, surprisingly, they responded that my not covering anything up that seemed relevant was the very best protection against their taking scandal at whatever had happened.

Through all of such history, *God is our shepherd*. Ephesians makes the point that besides life in this world, there is an afterlife in another world. In curing the man born blind, Jesus is making the point that he is Divine and his protection will carry the Faithful through all physical and moral difficulties.

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## Annotated Bibliography

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/about/censuredadmins/default.htm> (accessed January 31, 2011).

Material above the double line draws from material below the double line. Those uninterested in scholarly and tangential details should stop reading here. If they do, however, they may miss some interesting material.

## **1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a**

1 Samuel 16:7

Bettye Collier-Thomas, Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850-1979<sup>6</sup>

In 1926, Florence Spearing Randolph (1886-1951) used 1 Samuel 16:7, *do not judge from his appearance* to preach on “Christian Perfection.” Here she presents her holiness doctrine to which God calls all Christians. Collier-Thomas explains,

Although Randolph was one of the few women to have been called to pastor a church, she was no less concerned than any other preaching women about gaining support for her ministry by legitimizing the holiness doctrine and the related doctrine of Christian perfection.

The point is twofold: first that there was a Black preaching woman; second that she preached about Christian perfection to a primarily Black congregation.

1 Sam 16:1-15

L. Daniel Hawk, “Saul’s Altar”<sup>7</sup>

The Lectionary misses the point that God is not happy sharing his kingship with David. But the Israelites want a king, so God gives them a king. Without a king, one can do whatever one wants; one never has either to beg forgiveness or ask permission. I wonder just how pleased God is that the current Church hierarchy is organized as a monarchy. I am not expecting the Lectionary ever to pose that question.

1 Sam 16:1

Reed Lessing, review of Bryan E. Beyer, Encountering the Book of Isaiah: A Historical and Theological Survey<sup>8</sup>

Lessing reports that Beyer is too simplistic associating *I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem* with the royal line of David.

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<sup>6</sup> San Francisco, CA 94103-1741: A Wiley Imprint: 1998, 101-106, 112 (the source of the quotation), 130-134.

<sup>7</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 4 (October 2010) 686-687.

<sup>8</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2008) 561.

1 Sam 16:13

George T. Montague, S.M., review of John R. Levison, Filled with the Spirit<sup>9</sup>  
Montague faults Levison for not making enough of the Holy Spirit, as at 1 Samuel 16:13 in the First Testament; and making too much of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, as at 1 Corinthians 14:27, unused in the Lectionary. Montague concludes,

Levison's scholarly book is worth buying for the wealth of his research on Greco-Roman literature, for his extensive use of the Qumran writings that cast light on the biblical texts, and for multiple precious insights into both testaments, all presented in a delightful, engaging style.

### **Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 (1)**

### **Ephesians 5:11**

Ephesians 5:11

Bettye Collier-Thomas, Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850-1979<sup>10</sup>

Rosa A. Horne (1880-1976) uses Ephesians 5:11, *take no part in the fruitless works of darkness*, to preach against those in the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World who asserted that Jesus was God the Father. Horne asserted that Jesus, as the Son of God, was distinct from God the Father. The Reverend Horne delivered her sermon, "Is Jesus God the Father or is he the Son of God?" Collier-Thomas reports, "Criticizing churches that give their members rote phrases to repeat in order to be saved, Horn argues that genuine salvation comes only through truly repenting of one's sins so that Jesus will have mercy on them."

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<sup>9</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 4 (October 2010) 832.

<sup>10</sup> San Francisco, CA 94103-1741: A Wiley Imprint: 1998, 173-178, 184.

Eph 5:9-10

Alfio Marcello Buscemi, "The Evil of Self-Will: Admonition II of Saint Francis," translated by Edward Hagman, O.F.M.<sup>11</sup>

Saint Francis asserts that obedience "directs our heart in righteousness and holiness ... so that we might please God and be pleasing to him (Rom 12:1-2; Eph 5:9-10 [used here])." *Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.*

Eph 5:14

William Bales, "The Descent of Christ in Ephesians 4:9"<sup>12</sup>

Bales argues that *arise from the dead* means that the author of Ephesians believes that there is a place, outside of this world, where the dead live.

## John 8:12

### John 9:1-41

John 9:5

William M. Wright IV, "Greco-Roman Character Typing and the Presentation of Judas in the Fourth Gospel"<sup>13</sup>

Wright argues that,

The narrator also observes that when Judas departs, he goes out into the night ([John 12:] v. 30). The night which signifies the absence and opposite of Jesus as the Light of the World (3:12; 6:17; 8:12; 9:5 [used here]), indicates that Judas has gone out into the spiritual darkness apart from Jesus.

John 9:22

Adele Reinhartz, review of John P. Meier, [A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus, Vol. 4, Law and Love](#)<sup>14</sup>

Reinhartz reports that Meier makes overly much of the Jews putting the Christians out of the synagogue. All John is trying to do is maintain a community bond with the early Christians.

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<sup>11</sup> [Greyfriars Review](#) Vol. 19, Issue 1 (2005) 16.

<sup>12</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 72, No. 1 (January 2010) 99.

<sup>13</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 71, No. 3 (July 2009) 557.

<sup>14</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 72, No. 3 (July 2010) 603.

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John 9:29

Tobias Hagerland, "The Power of Prophecy: A Septuagintal Echo in John 20:19-23."<sup>15</sup>

Hagerland argues that John is taking care to present Jesus as the prophet *par excellence*. This is particularly attested by the man born blind.

John 9:29

Andrew E. Arterbury, "Breaking the Betrothal Bonds: Hospitality in John 4"<sup>16</sup>

Arterbury seems to agree with those others who use John 9:29, *we do not know where this one is from*, to argue that John is presenting Jesus as from another world.

John 9:35

Jeffrey L. Staley, review, Benjamin E. Reynolds, [The Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of John](#)<sup>17</sup>

John 9:35 is one of twelve references to Jesus as *the son of God* in the Gospel of John. Reynolds argues for a Jesus "who is a heavenly, preexistent, messianic figure; who acts in judgment and salvation; who gathers the righteous; and who is recognized for his Godlike characteristics." Reynolds nicely synthesizes what other scholars are thinking.

For more on sources see the Appendix file. [Personal Notes](#) are on the web site at [www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes](http://www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes)

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### Themes

For recurring themes in Sacred Scripture, see the following. The exclamation point (!) indicates where a principal reference list of passages related by a common theme or expression found. The abbreviation for *following* is f. For more lengthy following, the abbreviation is ff. The abbreviation for personal confusion is ? With this material, I am trying to lay a foundation for developing Biblical themes the next time through the Cycles, when I intend to add in which [Lectionary](#) readings the relevant passages are found.

Sacred Scripture develops themes for the following readings at Ephesians 5:8-14:

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<sup>15</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 71, No. 1 (January 2009) 90, 92, 95, 101.

<sup>16</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 72, No. 1 (January 2010) 81.

<sup>17</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 72, No. 1 (January 2010) 160.

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Verse 8 Ephesians 2, 11; 1 Peter 2:9; Matthew 5:14; John 12:36!  
Verse 9 Galatians 5:22!  
Verse 10 Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:9!; Colossians 3:20.  
Verse 11 Romans 13:12.  
Verse 12 1 Timothy 5:20! 2 Corinthians 4:2.  
Verse 13  
Verse 14 John 3:20 f.; 1 Corinthians 14:24 f.; Romans 13:11!

Sacred Scripture develops themes for the following readings at John 9:1-41:

Verse 1 Exodus 20:5 parallels John 34.  
Verse 2 Luke 13:2-5; John 11:4.  
Verse 3 John 5:17.  
Verse 4 Jeremiah 13:16 parallels John 11:9?  
Verse 5 John 8:12!  
Verse 6 Mark 8:23!  
Verse 7 John 5:2 parallels Luke 13:4? Isaiah 8:6.  
Verse 8  
Verse 9  
Verse 10 John 9:10.  
Verse 11  
Verse 12  
Verse 13  
Verse 14 John 5:9.  
Verse 15 John 9:10.  
Verse 16 John 1:24; John 6:46! John 2:18!  
Verse 17 John 7:43! John 1:21!  
Verse 18  
Verse 19  
Verse 20  
Verse 21  
Verse 22 John 7:13; John 19:38; John 20:19.  
Verse 23 John 9:34; John 12:42; John 16:2; Luke 6:22.  
Verse 24 Jos 7:19? Psalm 68:35; Luke 7:18; Revelation 14:7 etc.  
Verse 25  
Verse 26  
Verse 27  
Verse 28  
Verse 29 Numbers 12:2, 8; John 8:14; John 7:27 f.; John 19:9.  
Verse 30 John 3:10.  
Verse 31 Isaiah 1:15; Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 15:8, 29; Psalm 145:19.  
Verse 32  
Verse 33  
Verse 34 John 6:46! John 9:22! 3 John 10.

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Verse 35     John 1:41, 51!  
Verse 36  
Verse 37     John 4:26!  
Verse 38  
Verse 39     John 3:19; John 5:24; Matthew 11:25; John 13:13-15.  
Verse 40  
Verse 41     John 15:22, 24

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Manuscripts

Through Reading 70A, January 30, 2011, I designed these notes on the availability of manuscripts to make the point that uncertainty exists about exactly what Greek to use for the purposes of translation. At that point, I began offering manuscript availability for background when examining Translating the New Testament: Text, Translation, Theology, which I purchased based on the review in the Catholic Quarterly.<sup>18</sup>

Ephesians 5:8-14

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr.<sup>19</sup>

P. Chester Beatty II in Dublin and the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor have a parchment dating from about 200 with Ephesians 1:1—6:24.

John 9:3-8

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr.<sup>20</sup>

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York has a Sixth/Seventh Century parchment with John 9:3-4. The Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna has a Fifth century parchment with John 9:5-8.

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<sup>18</sup> Robert Hodgson, Jr., review of Translating the New Testament: Text, Translation, Theology, Stanley E. Porter and Mark J. Boda (eds.) (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), the Catholic Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 4 (October 2010) 877-878.

<sup>19</sup> Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 99.

<sup>20</sup> Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 98, 125.